

**UNOFFICIAL
STATE FIRE COMMISSION MEETING
FAIRMONT, WV
JUNE 13, 2008**

The official business meeting was called to order at 8:30 AM by Chairman Charles Eversole.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Charles L. Eversole, Chairman	John Bailey, Secretary	
Bill L. Spencer, Vice Chairman	Joseph J. Bostar, III	Dale
L. Clayton	Kenneth Morgan	James L. Oldaker
David Tolliver		

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Larry Goodwin	Francis A. Guffey, II	Randy
James	Chuck Runyon	Victor Stallard, Jr.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Spencer made a motion to approve the minutes of April 18, 2008. Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Edward Hicks, Dept. of Education
Murrey Loflin, WVU-FSE
Roderick Armstrong, RESA
Mike Freeman, RESA VII
Jim Ancell, RESA V
Stan Traylor, RESA
Rick Rice, RESA
Ron Bateman, ISO
Robert Nevins, ISO
Mike Basile, Spilman, Thomas & Basile
Roger Channell, Marion County
Bob Cannon, WV Code Officials Association
Gary Bonnett, WV State Firemen's Association
Ed Simmons, Fairmont Fire Department
Jim Toothman, Farmington VFD
Barry Bledsoe, Grant Town VFD
John Riley, Grant Town VFD

STAFF PRESENT:

Sterling Lewis, Jr., State Fire Marshal
Nancy Olson, Secretary
Debbie Hudson, Secretary

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

CORRESPONDENCE

Information received regarding Mid-Atlantic Conference being held in Maryland on September 18-20, 2008. Hotel reservations must be made by August 15th.

STAFF REPORTS

Fire Marshal Lewis stated he had two items to bring before the Fire Commission for action today. A complaint has been received against Lubeck Fire Department. A number of issues and criminal complaints are in this complaint. The criminal complaints have been turned over to the State Police. Another complaint which is outside the realm of the Fire Marshal's authority has been turned over to the Office of Emergency Medical Service. The third aspect of the complaint does trigger a definite evaluation. Commissioner Oldaker made a motion to refer the complaint to staff to address this issue. Commissioner Bostar seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

The second item is House Resolution 2. This resolution was passed by the House of Delegates during the regular session of the 2008 Legislative Session. This resolution is requesting the State Fire Commission to increase the salary of the State Fire Marshal by 6%. This resolution reads "Whereas the State Fire Marshal has broad responsibility for the implementation of fire programs in the state designed to minimize fire hazards, the effects of disaster, and the loss of life and property from fire; and Whereas, In light of the responsibility of the office, the remuneration paid to the State Fire Marshall lacks parity with similarly situated agency heads and commissioners, therefore, be it, Resolved by the House of Delegates: That is is hereby expressed by the members that the State Fire Commission increase by six percent the salary paid to the State Fire Marshal."

Commissioner Spencer made a motion to honor the request of the House of Delegates and increase the Fire Marshal's salary by 6%. Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion.

Fire Marshal Lewis requested permission to address the entire Fire Commission. He read a letter in response to this resolution. "I have just been made aware of House Resolution #2 that you were a sponsor of. I am pleased to see that someone notices the work we do at the Fire Marshal's Office. This may come as a surprise but I will not be able to accept a raise if the Fire Commissioner were to offer the 6%. I have been trying for four years to get my employees pay raises and promotions. I have not been able to accomplish this. I do not feel that as an agency head, it would be good for me to be advanced and not be able to do the same for my employees. I would again like to thank you for the support you have given the Fire Marshal's Office. If there is ever anything I can do to assist you or the Fire Departments you represent, please do not hesitate to call me."

Fire Marshal Lewis stated at this time, he would like to use this letter to turn down the 6% pay raise offered by the State Fire Commission.

Commissioner Spencer stated that due to the circumstances that the Fire Marshal has explained to us and why he feels that he should not be reciprocated a pay raise. He stated he would withdraw his motion if the second is withdrawn at this time. Commissioner Morgan withdrew his second to the motion. Chairman Eversole stated the motion and second have been withdrawn.

AGENCY REPORTS

Technical and Adult Training, Vo-Tech, Mr. Hicks stated there have been several personnel changes: At RESA III, Brenda Hagan has retired and the new office assistant is Tammy Norman. At RESA VII, Mike Freeman has a new assistant, Nancy Ancill. At RESA VIII, Roy Martin retired and they have hired David Plume as the First Aid/CPR Instructor. He comes from Dow Corning. The EMT Prep increases this year in participants. Mr. Hicks stated that they would like to set up a tour of the new Training Center for RESA III on Rt. 25 at Institute at the next meeting.

Training, WVU-FSE, Mr. Murrey Loflin stated the opening of the state fire academy is very close. The Junior Firefighter Camp starts on June 22nd and finishes up on Friday, June 27th. They have 50 campers enrolled and they are not only from West Virginia but from Maine, NJ, OH, VA. Everyone is welcome to come down and visit and have a meal with them. The dedication ceremony is on Tuesday, June 24th.

Insurance Services Office (ISO), Mr. Robert Nevins stated he would like to update the Fire Commission on an effort currently being made by ISO. ISO is taking on to conduct a comprehensive review on the current fire suppression rating schedule. Just recently, in the last month or so, they have released a draft of this in outline form to outside the state for review. They have working on for about 18 months and it's the first revision to the fire suppression rate schedule since 1980. It is only the 9th update since the early 1900's. The revised schedule is proposed to include enhancements that will address certain fire prevention code adoptions by communities, standard operating procedures, master and strategic plan by communities for fire protection, and that sort of thing. Adoption and recognition of our broader base on nationally recognized consensus standards such as NFPA, American Water Works, FCO Communications, that sort of thing. There is more emphasis on firefighter safety and also firefighter training. Items that are generally broadly accepted as improvements by the fire service community. At this stage now, they are soliciting input and feedback from outside the state. They would encourage people to visit their website at isolitigation.com when there is a general outline of these changes. He hopes to get a copy of that and other related information to the Fire Commission prior to the August meeting so that the Commission would have an opportunity to look at it and get it to the committee so they could entertain questions.

Office of Emergency Medical Services – No report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Training Committee, Commissioner Bostar stated that Commissioner James had been sent out of town on AEP emergency trip. He stated there was some language on the training certification document regarding instructors and they are going to hold that one until Commissioner James is back. Also, there were some changes that Commissioner James made on the actual training certification form. Discussion followed.

New curriculum submitted, Managing Emergency Incidents on a Roadway, there is not any paperwork to move on that. He stated also for the Hybrid Vehicle Emergency pending, they still don't have the necessary paperwork.

Commissioner Bostar stated based on some debate in the Committee meeting, he would like to make a recommendation that they look at three separate certificates of training, one of the Fire Commission, one from WVU and one from RESA. Everyone would have their own. A number of things arose during the committee meeting that lent itself to his concept. He stated he would like to propose to the Chairman that they integrate the standards committee with the training committee, even if it's just at the chairman level, to give them an opportunity between now and the next meeting to mull that over and maybe make a recommendation as to the review of what the ramifications may be with that. Chairman Eversole stated they would refer back to both the committee chairman and they can bring that up and address it. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Bostar stated in regards to the apprenticeship program, he does not feel there is going to be a problem there. It's approved curriculum and it's going to work and they're just going to have to work through the maze. It is not something to be concerned about.

FD Standards Evaluation, Commissioner Oldaker stated the Committee met on Thursday, June 12th. They had received one application packet for Fire Officer I equivalent certification. It was reviewed and found that all of the components necessary for compliance were present. The Committee endorsed it and will make a recommendation to the Fire Commission that Matthew I. Worthing of Bruceton Mills, and is the chief officer there be approved for Fire Officer I. Commissioner Spencer made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation. Commissioner Bostar seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Commissioner Oldaker stated he had received a request for a letter of support from the Elite Swift Water Institute in Fayetteville, WV and he forwarded it to Commissioner James of the Training Committee for action. They have requested funding through the New River Community and Technical College to develop an online swift water awareness level class and a rope rescue awareness level class for WV firefighters. He recommended it be forwarded to the Training Committee. Chairman Eversole agreed with the recommendation.

Commissioner Oldaker stated they are still addressing equivalencies when they come up, such as the apprenticeship request and the fire officer I compliances. They have two that they are still trying to get the backup documentation, one from Kentucky and one from Ohio. They are waiting for replies to the request. Discussion followed.

Recruitment and Retention Committee, Commissioner Runyon. No report.

Procedures Development Committee, Commissioner Bailey. No report.

Special Issues, Commissioner Bostar – No report.

Legislative and Budget, Commissioner Spencer stated everything is going along on schedule.

Home Inspectors, Building Code Officials, Building and Fire Code Committees, Commissioner Guffey. No report.

Fire Marshal Lewis stated that Deputy Fire Marshal Carrico is working on the rules for Title 87, Series 7 “Certification and Continuing Education of Building Code Officials”. Mr. Cannon is interested in this rule.

TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on August 22, 2008 at the Charleston Civic Center, Charleston, WV. The Committee Meetings will be held on Thursday, August 21, 2008.

The October meeting will be in Canaan Valley, WV

GOOD OF THE ORDER

The meeting in August is in conjunction with the State Firemen’s Association Conference.

Commissioner Oldaker stated there was opposing agendas that erupted in the legislative session. The Legislature created a joint committee to look on the volunteer’s side, what issues need to be addressed to try to help relieve some of the problems in recruitment and retention. The co-chairs of that joint committee asked the State Firemen’s Association to meet and come up with a list of ten (10) action items that the fire service, the volunteer service would like to do. The officers met in legislative committees and broke that down to five (5) items. The items have been sent in to that Committee and hope they are continuing to work on it. There has also been an effort spearheaded by the Chief’s Association to set up joint meetings between all of the organizations in the state to try to come up with a common agenda. Some of the items included length of service, standards exemptions for tax year for volunteer firefighters through Brickstreet, coverage at 100% of regular salary, free online training for volunteers, at their individual pace and the complete study on the value of a volunteer fire department and the people of West Virginia. Discussion followed.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Spencer made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Tolliver seconded the motion. The ayes and nays having been taken on a voice vote, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Sterling Lewis, Jr.
State Fire Marshal